

Forest Certification Work Instruction
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**Date of Draft Document:****Effective Date:** February 7, 2006**Revision Number:** 1**Supersedes Version Dated:** June 20, 2005

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**Work Instruction Title:** 3.3 Best Management Practices--Road Closures**Work Area Group:** 3 - Best Management Practices

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**Purpose:** To provide direction regarding the closure of Department roads.

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**Work Instruction:**

**From PA 451, Part 324.811:** *“Forest Road” means a hard surface road, gravel, or dirt road, or other route capable of travel by a 2-wheel drive, 4 wheel conventional vehicle designed for highway use, except an interstate, state, or county highway. “Forest Trail” means a designated path or way capable of travel only by a vehicle less than 50 inches in width.*

**Emergency Road Closures:**

An emergency road closure may be invoked when there is a public safety and/or a significant environmental concern. A significant environmental concern includes, but is not limited to: deep rutting or the potential for deep rutting, sediment flow into a stream, flooding, failure of a bridge, culvert failure that results in significant stream sedimentation, threats to threatened or endangered species, and threats to special cultural or historic sites.

The Director of the Department of Natural Resources will issue a standing Director’s Land Use Order for Emergency Road Closure that can be implemented as needed and per the following procedure:

- 1) A DNR employee who identifies an existing road or trail meeting at least one of the above criteria for emergency road closure should immediately inform their supervisor and inform the FMFM Unit Manager.
- 2) The FMFM Unit Manager will evaluate the reported road condition, and if there is a public safety or significant environmental concern will immediately close the road. Posting is required, and in addition closure may be achieved by placing barricades, berms, gating, signing, etc.
- 3) The FMFM Unit Manager will immediately contact their District Supervisor who will contact the respective Ecoteam Chairperson and report the situation. The FMFM Unit Manager will complete the Road Assessment Checklist and Forest Road Treatment Proposal and follow through with approvals.
- 4) The Ecoteam will meet as soon as possible regarding the emergency road closure, and will determine whether to continue with a temporary emergency closure, or to proceed with permanent road closure. The FMFM Unit Manager will receive written notification of the Ecoteam’s decision through the District Forest Supervisor.
- 5) The road shall remain closed until the emergency situation is corrected, or closure is confirmed through the non-emergency road closure process.
- 6) If it is determined that the emergency road closure is not appropriate, the FMFM Unit Manager will lift the emergency closure and identify and an alternative method to address the problem.

### **Non-Emergency “normal” road closures:**

Any DNR employee identifying an existing road or trail which they believe should be temporarily, seasonally, or permanently closed should submit a proposal to their supervisor. The supervisor, after determining that a state forest road should be closed temporarily, seasonally, or permanently, will proceed with the following:

1. Complete the Forest Road Checklist and Forest Road Proposal. Roads may be grouped by compartment or geography to streamline the process to evaluate more than one road at a time.
2. Seek review and approval of Forest Road Proposal from the local FMFM Unit Manager, Wildlife Habitat Biologist, Fisheries Biologist and LED Supervisor as appropriate. (Refer to Road Assessment Checklist and Forest Road Treatment Proposal).
3. Seek review and approval through the Compartment Review Process followed by review and approval by the Ecoteam. If due to time constraints, the proposal cannot utilize the compartment review process, the request for closure will be sent to the Ecoteam, and supervisors in the chain of command will be advised.
4. If the Ecoteam approves closure, the land manager will request a Director's Order for road closure through the normal Land Use Order's of the Director process.
5. If the Ecoteam denies closure, the written decision is returned to the land manager.

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**Scope:** (All State Forest Land and Affected Divisions): ☒ State Forest Land ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

☒ DNR – FMFM ☒ DNR – Wildlife ☒ DNR – Fish ☒ DNR – Law ☐ DNR – Parks

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**Responsibility and Role:** (Staff who will implement or supervise this instruction)

<b>Job Title/Division</b>	<b>Role</b>
DNR staff desiring road closure	Collect information and prepare road assessment checklist and forest road treatment proposal. Report BMP non-conformances on appropriate forms and inform supervisor of road closure recommendation.
Ecoteams	Review proposal and forward road closure recommendations.
Statewide Council	Address disputes not resolved by Ecoteams
FMFM Division Office	Prompt processing of road closure proposals
Unit Manager/ FMFM	Evaluate roads for closure, make emergency closures, notify Ecoteams and Forest Supervisors of road closure recommendations, request Director's Order for road closure.
Supervisors/DNR	Complete Forest Road Closure Proposal and checklist. Spearhead local review of Forest Road Proposal.
DNR Director	Issue a standing Director's Land Use Order for Emergency Road Closure that can be implemented as needed. Provide public review and issue order for normal road closures

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**Training/Skills:** (Those required to accomplish work instruction)

<b>Item</b>	<b>Brief Description of Skill or Course</b>	<b>Exists/ New</b>
Non-emergency road closures	Understanding of roles at various levels to improve flow of information and decision making efficiency for closing existing Department roads	<input type="checkbox"/> E <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N
Emergency road closures	Understanding of roles at various levels to expedite closure of Department roads in the event of severe weather, public safety issues, or Best Management Practices problems.	<input type="checkbox"/> E <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N

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**References:**

- (Director's Order Procedure),
- Federal Law section 319 of the Clean Water Act of 1972 as amended 1987, state law part 31, part 91, of PA 451.
- Public Act 451 of 1994, Part 811 324.81101e and Part 811 324.81101f.

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**Monitoring:**

- BMP non-compliance forms.
- Operations Inventory inspection every entry period. LED tracking using GPS in vehicles (proposed).
- Forest Road closure proposals

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**Records:**

- Monitoring sheet for BMP non-compliance.
  - Ecoteam road closure recommendation.
  - Forest road closure proposals (new).
  - Road assessment checklists (new).
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